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SIPDIS

STATE FOR S/GWI, S/AF/C, AS/AF, AF/C, AF/RSA
USAID FOR COO/ODP, AA/AFR, AFR/EA, AFR/DP, AFR/SD, DCHA/CMM,
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SUBJECT: USAID MISSION DIRECTOR MEETS WITH DEPUTY SRSG FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, LEILA ZERROUGUI

¶1. Summary: USAID Mission Director Stephen Haykin met with Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General, Leila Zerrougui on August 28. Zerrougui provided a comprehensive perspective on the related issues of weak security apparatus of the Congolese state, impunity and human rights issues, notably sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Zerrougui and Haykin exchanged information on current SGBV programs and coordination efforts. The establishment of an SGBV window in the international community's new Stabilization and Recovery Funding Facility for DRC will help to focus resources and coordination. Post will participate in review of all projects considered for support through the Fund. End summary.

Human Rights Violations and Impunity in Context

¶2. USAID Mission Director, Stephen Haykin met with Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General, Leila Zerrougui and her staff on August 28. Zerrougui took the opportunity to outline the comprehensive challenges underlying SGBV and other human rights abuses. She identified the need for reforms of the army and police to improve discipline and fight abuses. She noted, however, that this will require addressing the problems of impunity, which, in turn, require addressing the dysfunction of the judicial and prison systems. Note: Zerrougui, a former justice of the Algerian Supreme Court, has proven to be a very effective voice in articulating the root causes of human rights abuses and the need for a broad approach to address them. End note.

Protection

¶3. Zerrougui referred to a newly arrived message from UN New York, regarding Secretary Clinton's concern for protection of women in IDP camps. She stated that MONUC was planning to call together all concerned UN agencies in country to discuss how to improve this protection. MONUC is embarking in an effort to update information on numbers of IDPs concerned and the priority locations for intervention. There has already been some pilot work with protection teams accompanying groups of women to collect fire wood. Comment: MONUC is taking the Secretary's demarche seriously and a prompt response is likely. End comment.

14. Much of the discussion touched on USG and UN programming to address SGBV, with the mutual recognition that assisting the survivors and prosecuting perpetrators are necessary but not sufficient without complementary actions to address root causes. In consultation with key stabilization donors (U.S., UK Netherlands, France, Belgium, Sweden, Canada, Germany and Japan), MONUC is in the process of launching a Stabilization and Recovery Funding Facility for the Democratic Republic of Congo, with the UNDP's Multi-Donor Trust Fund Unit as the Administrative Agent. A special window of the fund for SGBV programs is anticipated, to channel contributions from interested donors. Implementation of all Funding Facility activities will be carried out through UN entities and their partners.

15. Comment: This is a significant shift in the financial architecture for SGBV programs in the DRC as it replaces the UNFPA's "Programme Conjointe," which had been receiving contributions from the Netherlands, Belgium and Canada for SGBV activities. Since Post will participate in the Funding Facility's board, even if the USG continues to use parallel funding mechanisms for stabilization activities, programming of SGBV resources will become more transparent and coordination will be easier to achieve. MONUC staff is now developing the first set of SGBV program proposals for potential funding through the Funding Facility. Post will continue dialogue with MONUC and the other actors as additional USG initiatives are developed. Post's Point of Contact on SGBV issues is Sara Rasmussen-Tall at USAID. End comment.

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